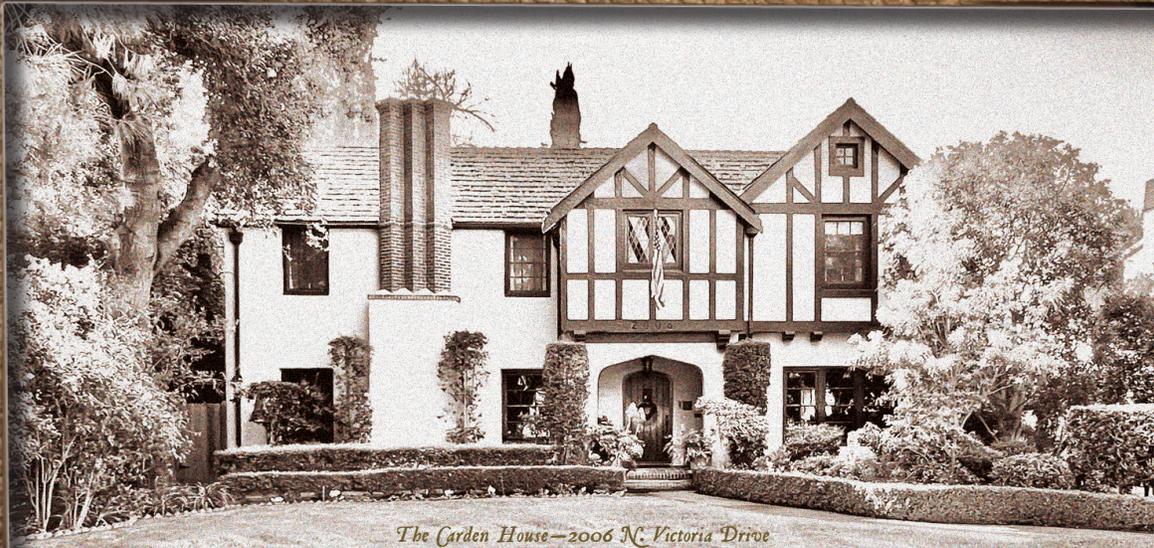


FLORAL PARK ARCHITECTURE

English Tudor Revival



The Garden House—2006 N. Victoria Drive

by David Ko

At the beginning of the 20th century, America thrived as the world leader in innovation. For the first time, self-made millionaires lived in meticulously designed affluent suburban communities outside industrialized cities. America, then a nation that hosted the most World Fairs, showcased more technological inventions than the rest of the world combined. Electricity, light, automobiles, airplanes, motion pictures, cameras, sound recording, phonographs, medicine, and countless wonders

changed the course of humanity. The wave of new wealth-built homes made Tudor Revival the must-have architectural style, following in the footsteps of the Rockefellers, Carnegies, Morgans, and Vanderbilts. These new homes were, however, modest compared to the lavish, opulent mansions of financier, oil and transportation tycoons built several decades earlier during the Gilded Age.

The Tudor Revival style spread to tony enclaves in Philadelphia, Chicago, and Cleveland and notably Detroit's Palmer Wood, the automobile capital of America. It boasted the highest concentration of Tudor revival built by wealthy

automobile Mongols such as the Ford clans who built entire enclaves of homes in the same style. The other popular revival styles of homes during that period were still considered novel and trendy, having not yet stood the test of time. The perception of owning a Tudor Revival home symbolized success. Philanthropists, politicians, doctors, and attorneys preferred Tudor Revival homes, the top choice then and still a popular choice now.

When Wall Street money in the early 1900s gave rise to upscale New York City suburbs, the newly wealthy built homes later dubbed "stockbroker Tudors" because their owners made their money during

the booming 1920s stock market.

They wanted to give the impression of being more established, more “old money” than *nouveau riche*. The sophistication of these owners demanded exquisite consistency, both inside and out. The extensive wood-paneled interiors were reminiscent of collegiate libraries and elite colleges, a look befitting highly esteemed professions such as surgeons, educators, and lawyers. “Gothic” Tudor Revival had been famous on the East Coast of the United States since the mid-nineteenth century because of its associations with pre-industrial eras, authenticity, and legitimacy.

Tudor Revival architecture caught on locally because it mimicked permanence in a self-consciously new city and offered whimsy and escapism — welcome traits in the homes of Hollywood. The houses are warm and cozy, even if they’re large. Back then, homeowners preferred a non-open floor plan where every room had a purpose.

Tudor Revival architecture flourished in Southern California after World War I as several events popularized the style. Soldiers who served in The Great War saw firsthand the Gothic-era cathedrals, castles, and vernacular town and farm buildings of northern Europe.

Although photographic books of these regions published in the 1920s influenced this popular connection for the next ten years, the Hollywood film industry also did much to promote the style.

Early iterations of Tudor Revival in Hollywood focused on evoking a feeling of time and place and creating that feeling in the narrow visual field of a camera frame or modest size suburban home.



Buildings were designed to suggest development over time, using irregular massing, second-story overhangs, crooked roof lines, and non-linear window arrangements to create the illusion. These buildings distinguished by their picturesque, created through deliberate and fanciful combinations and faithful replications of building forms and motifs from northern Europe and pre-industrial times.

Charlie Chaplin constructed his first studio in the Tudor Revival style with a street-facing elevation of an Elizabethan streetscape. Tudor Revival styles of 1919 to 1930 had a symbiotic relationship with the film industry, with motion pictures providing the inspiration,

media, and craftspeople to popularize the techniques. The industry also created the public’s sense of historical precedents for Period Revival styles. Movies were, to the public, the primary authority on how a Tudor country house ought to look, and they popularized a given look by associating it with favorite film stories. Set designers fit as many visual references to a time and place as possible into a movie set, creating historically impossible architecture with details crammed into narrow views. Craftspeople in the film industry were capable of creating a false sense of patina, giving the impression of age, and adding a level of fanciful fiction to the Tudor Period Revival style that evolved into the Storybook style.

Hollywood almost lost to Florida at a flip of a nickel when the Christie Brothers, the first silent motion picture company, relocated to Hollywood in 1911 from Edison, New Jersey. Both Al and Charles Christie built the first Tudor Revival home in southern California from their fortune made in the Nickelodeon movie empire. The interior and exterior of their Beverly Hills home frequently appeared as the backdrop of slapstick films, inadvertently promoting Tudor’s popularity.

The Tudors were once a ruling family of kings, queens, and lords who controlled England. Their lives were dramatic and lavish. The Tudor Revival movement in architecture of the 20th century was based on 16th-century English tastes, adjusted to meet modern comforts. It was designed to feel like a country cottage, but would fit perfectly in suburban areas.

Tudors were most popular during the 1920s and 1930s. Architects



2012 Victoria Drive



2353 Riverside Drive



2203 Greenleaf Street



2221 Victoria Drive

who studied in Europe in the early 20th century were inspired by the Old World styles and brought Tudor-style homes to America. Mainly built by wealthy homeowners,

Their distinct look is balanced and easily identifiable among other houses, making them easy to pick out on the street. Tudor-style homes come in different sizes in Floral Park. They have a quaint storybook appearance. Some more substantial dwellings, extensively built on Victoria and North Heliotrope Drives, have a charming, Old-World feel that appeals to many. They have a look and feel of English manors.

English Tudor is among the most challenging style to design and build. Architects who apprenticed in construction had the upper hand in design, having learned to work with the many materials used commonly on Tudor Revival homes. These included stacked bricks, varying stone sizes, half-timber construction, the unique texture of the plaster, intricate

wood joinery and decorative carving, embellishment of carved masonry, and precast concrete trims. Most of the Tudor-style homes had classic half-timbering tops with bottom brick structures. Back during the glory days of the Old English Tudor, half-timbering was needed. Builders would build wooden frames and fill them with stucco. Nowadays, that building method is outdated, so the timbering you see is merely decorative, recalling the structural timbers that held up such houses centuries earlier.

The most distinguishing feature of the style is the front-facing gable. Characteristically, these would be brick or stucco and feature a façade dominated by one or more prominent cross gables, steeply pitched, and punctuated with small dormers topped with slate. Because these homes mimicked a style designed to weather colder climates with lots of rain and snow, they were best suited for the northern half of the United States, though they're popular in other areas of the country as well. The steep pitch roof was a practical solution to re-

duce accumulated ice in snowy climates. In Southern California's mild weather, the steep roof housed the bonus of an intended attic, often converted into a bonus room or storage space.

The ends of a gable roof, were decorated with verge boards. Their design ranges from simple to highly carved. Other striking features of Tudor Revival homes include leaded-glass windows (often diamond-paned), arched doorways, massive chimneys and stone brick.

The style was initially associated with wealth because of its intricate masonry patterning, called "quilting," and expensive materials, such as copper, slate, and stone for roofs and decorative features. By the end of the 1920s, masonry veneering techniques allowed even modest examples of the style to mimic the brick and stone exteriors closely on some English prototypes from the Tudor and Jacobean

1923 Riverside Drive



2035 Victoria Drive



2437 North Park Blvd.



2450 North Park Blvd.





2315 Riverside Drive



1914 Victoria Drive



1901 Heliotrope Drive



2436 Riverside Drive

periods and elevations clad in contrasting shades of bricks.

Tudor Revivals in Southern California caught a second wind during the fanciful Period Revival era of the 1920s and 1930s. In Floral Park, home to the best Tudor Revival houses in Orange County, a legacy due to competitive and abundant architectural talents. Builder Alison Honer blended numerous 19th Street intersections with multiple revival-style homes. The blend embodies the creativity and salesmanship that defined important palm tree-lined streets in the “Honer district,” a technique he learned in Beverly Hills.

Among the new affluents, Tudor home was an excellent pedigree offering a century of a time-honored tradition. No other style of home provided warmth to the interior. Brick fireplace, inglenook, herringbone or parquet wood floor, wine cellars, richly stained moldings, wood wall paneling, carved wood-paneled ceiling, beam and truss ceil-

ing, decorative wrought irons, and wall sconces adorned these homes without being ostentatious.

Finally, Tudor chimneys are another notable element where the details stand out. In the beginning, homes had large chimneys to heat the houses back in the 16th century. The ducts are often made with brick or stucco and decorated with chimney pots. The massive chimney remained the iconic feature. Tudor homes have multiple rooms that serve different purposes, formal rooms with their fireplace as a heat source. Often, large fireplaces included inglenooks where people could sit to keep warm. These structures could consist of second stories and, with them, staircases made of hand-hewn timbers. These upper-story rooms—usually bed chambers—generally had ceilings with exposed beams.

Fenestration often included canted bays with diamond pane casement windows. Windows are tall and narrow with multiple

panes—sometimes rectangular, sometimes diamond-shaped. Large groupings of windows are common, and occasionally there are picturesque floating bay windows called oriel windows on the first or second story. Though often not in the center of the house, the front door with chunky ironware lends a Medieval look. It is still a significant architectural feature of Tudor homes. They typically have a round arch at the top and tend to be bordered by contrasting stones or bricks that stand out against the plaster wall.

Florence Yoch was California’s first female landscape architect. She was born in Santa Ana and returned to her roots after graduating from UC Berkeley and Cornell to start her landscape design firm. In the infancy of her career in Floral Park, She designed intimate gardens and mainly formal English gardens in the neighborhood to complement Tudor revival houses and cottages, which blended indoor, outdoor, interior architecture, and ornamentals

2005 Ross Street



2014 Greenleaf Street



2004 Ross Street



2130 Ross Street



outdoor gardens seamlessly. Yoch was instrumental in the character theming of Floral Park by selecting different sidewalk trees in the neighborhood also providing a year-round food source for the thriving wildlife population. Her works are considered the hidden “Picasso” here in Floral Park. Lucille Council became Yoch’s business partner, which she would hold in business and life. Both were the landscape architects to the stars and moguls of Hollywood’s golden age. Their iconic works, immortalized in films, the MGM set and landscape design to Scarlett O’Hara’s Southern Plantation house featured in *Gone With the Wind* and many other classic films of the era.

Another famed architect, Paul R. Williams, who is known for his Tudor Revival design in Hancock Park and Pasadena; civic buildings and post office in Santa Ana, also designed homes in Floral Park.



*Lucille Council
and Florence Yoch*

Unfortunately, his records, stored in a South Central LA bank vault, were destroyed by fire during the 1992 riot, proving provenance ever more difficult.

By 1920s, Floral Park attracted affluent families, who made their fortune in the rising civic, commercial, or industrial sectors. Some bought adjoining lots and built two-story Tudor estates, while most built smaller single-story quaint Tudor cottages or Storybook homes. For both, owners are most proud of their flower gardens that complement the houses. On average, Orange County

families moved every five years; however, owners of Floral Park Tudor homes stayed for generations; sometimes, we refer to these homes as heirloom estates.

When World War II came about, Tudor-style construction had already fallen out of

popularity under harsh criticism of the public a decade earlier, the 1929 Depression, when the country’s population could not even afford a meal, let alone a shelter. Children had a better chance of survival at the orphanage than staying with the family. The country concentrated on new affordable housing advancements that could be built quickly and efficiently on compact, modest budgets and look more ‘American.’

Architects who designed fancy homes, shamed by their peers, had to adapt new design skills to emphasize the importance of function, efficiency, and cost rather than beauty, form, and ornamentation.

The Tudor Revival style is loosely adapted from a range of late Medieval and early Renaissance English architecture. The American Tudor introduced non-historic elements such as the prominent front gable. The style is characterized by:



THE TUDOR ARCH

The pointed Tudor Arch is particular to the style, as are other arches for entryways and gates.



MULTI-PANE WINDOWS

Multi-pane windows with a diamond pattern and transom winders are common features.



OVERHANGS

The second story or upper gable end features an overhang with decorative supports.



FOCAL CHIMNEYS

Massive, decorative chimneys with multiple flues and decorative chimney pots



STEEP ROOFLINES

Steeply-pitched gabled roofs are character-defining. Eaves are often uneven.



NATURAL MATERIALS

Decorative half-timbering is common as is the use of stone and brick. Multiple natural materials used.